

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

WINTER ISSUE

Greensburg, Indiana

JANUARY 1996

OCCASION: Thirty-fifth Annual Dinner
Meeting of the Historical
Society of Decatur County.

Christmas Open House Workers-On Dec. 3,
the following members put on a very
nice & well attended open house:

PLACE: Greensburg Presbyterian
Church, NE corner of the
Courthouse Square.

Decorating
Ginny Garvey
Mary Gaynor Bryan
Jackie Mendenhall
Lois McLaughlin

Refreshments
Ruth Oliger
Marge Hunter
Maxine Clemons
Lenora Bainbridge
Jamie King

DATE: Saturday Evening, Feb. 17,
1996 at 6:00 P.M.

DINNER: By the ladies of the church.
Dinner is \$6.00 each. Please
reserve by check sent to
Maurice Keith, 773 E. County
Rd. 200N., Greensburg. Res-
ervation deadline is evening
of Feb. 15.

Music

Connie Thompson, Justin Rust, Bob Doles
& Silhouettes & Shadows.

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LAST FALL MEETING:

Historical Society

PROGRAM: The main event of the evening
will be a presentation by Thomas K. Kra-
sean. Mr. Krasean is with the Indiana
Historical Society. His title is Director
of Field Services. His subject will be
"The Canal Era in Indiana". Mr. Krasean
is well versed in his subject & an excell-
ent speaker, don't miss this historical
meeting. There will be a short business
meeting during the evening.

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Ronald Woods

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DONATIONS

Eleanor Couch
Mrs. Welby M. Frantz
Mrs. William McCord

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Museum Items-Have been given by Mary
Gaynor Bryan, which include many old
Christmas decorations.

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More than 75 people attended the
fall meeting of the Historical Society
of Decatur County which honored the
50th year of the end of World War II.
President John Westhafer introduced
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5584
Commander Rex Alexander who explained
the "Lest We Forget" segment introduc-
ed this year at post meetings honor-
ing veterans who served in that war.
Commander Alexander noted that one of
the aims of the V.F.W. is to perpetuate
the memory of veterans.

Post historian Bill Ford showed
the memorial painting "In Harm's Way"
which was presented to the V.F.W. Post
by the "Survivors of the Sinking of the
U.S.S. Bismarck Sea Association." James
Edgar Land, a Decatur County man, was
aboard the ship. Ford was the last
county man to see Land before the ship
was hit.

Veteran Bill Hunter told the group
of his friendship with Jack and Paul
Shriver, brothers who were killed dur-
ing the war. The Greensburg High School
football field was dedicated to the
(continued next page)

Shriver brothers.

Ford showed name rubbings of the six Decatur County Veterans who are memorialized in the "Courts of the Missing" at the Honolulu National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

Jackie Mendenhall and Pat Smith were in charge of "The Home Front," the segment of the meeting which included personal experiences of those attending who saved scrap metal, fats, rubber to aid the war effort, and learned how to cope with rationing.

Two women veterans of World War II, Jessie Evans Land and Kathryn Ernstes Bailey, attended the meeting.

Charles Maple, Chaplain of the V.F.W. Post gave a history of TAPS and Freddie Shoopman sang the words, the first time many attending the meeting had heard them.

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EARLY SETTLERS "BRANDED" STOCK

Early settlers of the county had their own methods of "branding" cattle.

The "brand" was necessary because stock roamed at will.

The "stock marks" were recorded -- first by the county clerk, who also served as recorder, and later by the recorder.

First entries were made in April, 1822 by Henry H. Talbott. Talbott also made the last entry as clerk on Oct. 16, 1855.

The last entry recorded by the recorder was in 1871.

A few of the markings:

Martin Adkins' stock mark is smooth crop of each ear and an under bite out of the right ear. April 9, 1822.

Thomas Hendricks' stock mark is a swallowford in the right ear and a half crop off the under side of the left ear. April 9, 1822.

William O. Rofs' stock mark is a crop and split in the left ear and under bite in the right ear, April 9, 1822.

Milton H. Williams stock mark is a crop off the left ear and an under bite out of the right ear, April 19, 1822.

By 1871 there were approximately 350 different stock mark entries recorded in Decatur County.

G'burg Daily News
June 8, 1959

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LINCOLN HERITAGE TRAIL COOK BOOK RECIPES

During these cold winter evenings you might want to experiment with some of the old-time recipes that our pioneer ancestors are said to have favored. Surely the pie crust below would be all right to have one evening even if it does call for a cup of lard.

I got the recipes that follow from a book titled "Lincoln Heritage Trail Cook Book." I don't know if Lincoln really loved Mary Todd's White Cake or if any of these recipes were ever set on the Lincoln table. Nor do I see that it makes much difference if we can now enjoy reading about the food the early pioneers enjoyed and even try a few.

There's no question that the settlers had to, for the most part, eat what was available. They found plenty of good things to eat and the women (I don't think men cooked much back then) found ways to use the local products to make the dishes they had been used to by altering the ingredients.

The cook book has this to say about the Lincoln family:

Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809 on the Sinking Spring farm about 3 miles south of Hodgenville, Kentucky. When Abe was 2½ years old the Lincoln family moved to a farm on Knob Creek about 7 miles north east of Hodgenville. Abe wrote, "my first recollection is the place on Knob Creek." December 1816, the Lincoln family moved from Kentucky to southern Indiana, locating on Little Pigeon Creek. Here young Abe, age 7 grew from youth to manhood.

This section of the country was famous for sausage. Each housewife had her own special recipe with her own method of mixing and seasoning. Abe Lincoln's stepmother was one of the best sausage makers. On a solid block of hard wood she would pound the best cuts of meat available with a wooden mallet. Then she would add seasoning and herbs and mix it thoroughly. The sausage was packed into crocks and covered with freshly rendered lard and set away to ripen. Abe Lincoln said he could smell that good sausage cooking when he was still a mile away. Abe loved to have fried apples and salt pork for breakfast--or biscuits with ham and cream gravy.

Recipes, passed from generation to generation, kept alive the native traditions of early settlers. Present day eating habits in different areas often tell the story of their early settlement and provide us today with a rich and varied cuisine. This collection of recipes, along the Lincoln Heritage Trail, have been updated for today's kitchens and includes many of Abe's favorites from his days on the Kentucky farm to his years in the White House.

SUPER PIE CRUST

3 cups flour
1 tbsp. vinegar
1 tsp. salt
5 tbsp. cold water
1 cup lard
1 egg

Blend flour, salt and lard. Add vinegar, cold water and egg. Mix well and chill.

MARY TODD'S WHITE CAKE

Mr. Lincoln is said to have remarked that Mary Todd's White Cake was the best he had ever eaten. This confection was originated by Monsieur Giron, a Lexington caterer, on the occasion of Lafayette's visit.

1 cup butter
1 cup chopped blanched almonds
2 cups sugar
3 tsp. baking powder
3 cups flour
6 egg whites
1 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla

Cream butter and sugar, sift flour and baking powder together three times, and add to butter and sugar, alternating with milk. Stir in nut meats and beat well. Then fold in the stiffly beaten whites and vanilla. Pour into well greased and floured pan. Bake one hour in a moderate oven at 350°, or until the cake tests done.

LINCOLN'S STEAK

A favorite from Lincoln days, was a thick steak fried in a heavy skillet with plenty of butter, then spread with salt and mustard and cook over

a low heat until very tender. Place on a hot platter and serve it with

chopped pickled walnuts. Then pour a cup of strong coffee in the frying pan and let it boil up one time, pour it over the steak and serve quickly.

SALLY'S WEDDING DINNER

2 fat wild turkeys roasted a rich brown
a saddle of deer meat
6 large vegetable pies--full of turnips, beans
and potatoes
a big bowl of wild honey
a bowl of maple sugar
at least a hundred fried Kentucky wonders
watermelon preserves
cherry preserves
bushel of pawpaws
Tea

....From "Abe Lincoln of Pigeon Creek"

Abraham Lincoln's sister, Nancy, called Sarah or Sally, was born February 10, 1807 and died January 20, 1828, a few years after her marriage to Aaron Grigsby.

....by Pat Smith

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DODDRIDGE ALLEY

Doddridge Alley came from Franklin County in 1823 and settled in Decatur County in what would become Clay Township 13 years later. He was the first elected sheriff of this county and represented Decatur County in the Legislature in 1826 and again in 1831.

One of the bills he introduced was one giving sheriffs authority to perform marriages, giving as his reason that "ministers are scarce but sheriffs are found everywhere."

Perhaps the most unusual bill he introduced was the one providing for annexation of 18 sections of Shelby County to Decatur County, for the reason that "Shelby County is unhealthy and some of its people want out of it."

In 1825, the first schoolhouse in Clay Township was built on his land.

While going over some old Standard newspapers the following was spotted. Many good stories were told about Alley, some still repeated. It's impossible now to know which were true and which stories just got bigger with the telling but most still make good reading.

From the Standard, in the 1890's.

In a last STANDARD "O T," gives some reminiscences of "Dod" Alley. I happen to be old enough to remember something about him. There is no question about his being the most eccentric representative ever sent from this county to the legislature. The two bills O. T. reports that he tried to have enacted demonstrate that fact.

The first time he was elected must have been for the fun of it. To elect him twice was carrying the joke too far.

Whatever else may be said of him, he was a successful bushwhack campaigner in that early day. He did not stuff his pockets with platforms and documents like the modern would-be statesman does, but he did load them with flasks, with the contents of which he was very generous to voters.

Whiskey did not pay a third of the U. S. revenue then, and was worth only about 15 cents a gallon, and a barrel worth \$5.00 would wet a fine lot of dry throats.

Isaiah Kemble, his opponent (for the legislature the first term), was born, raised and educated in New Jersey. He came of Quaker stock, that accounted in part for his antislavery and anti-whiskey prejudices. He wouldn't treat. It was not from parsimony but principle.

There was a militia muster, and he would not treat, getting a heavy public cursing from his neighbor, Nathan Swails, for such anti-candidatorial refusal.

Well, he was beaten at the polls and Mr. Alley was triumphantly elected. I was then too young to know this, but it is a family tradition and is substantially true.

Years after this, in Greensburg from a country wagon, I heard Mr. Alley make an Alley speech. I don't remember what his hobby was, (he always had one), but I think he wanted to go again to the legislature. To show his countrymen his patriotism and generosity, and incidentally to make a few votes, he made a 4th of July barbecue, to which he invited everybody, irrespective of party, to come and eat

his bread and roast beef. Several hundred went and tried to masticate his beef, which unfortunately was about half raw; and on the 1st Monday in August voted for the other fellow - one of which I was.

He had for the time a tolerably good residence, a large Barnard a fine grove of young walnut trees, his own planting, of which he was very proud. He had his barn protected from lightning in quite an original way. A few feet from It he had planted a section of tree thirty or forty feet high. In the top of this he had inserted an iron rod whose connection with the earth was that high wooden post.

He was one of the early pioneers who helped to hew out the woods and make a good home. We give him due credit for It, while we smile at his eccentricities. C. K.

He built himself a monument of stone quarried on his farm. It is fifteen or twenty feet square and has a window in one end. Being asked the purpose of of a window in a monument, his reply was, that then the devil came to get him he might jump out of the window and escape. It is situated in the edge of the walnut grove spoken of by C. K. in last week's STANDARD, on a beautiful sloping hillside which is divided by a little ravine. To a boy a monument, tombstone as It was then called, thus erected during one's lifetime for himself, together with the story of the window, seemed in some way to carry with it the idea of ghosts, and the grove became a veritable sleepy hollow. It is pleasant to know that the window has been made to serve a different purpose and now contains a tablet erected to the memory of Mrs. Alley, placed there by her children.

The Alley farm is now owned by Mr. Henry Christian, of this city. In 1890 about one-half of the Walnut trees in the grove were sold to O. L. Pulse & Co. and converted into lumber.

The last time I remember of seeing Mr. Alley was during the Civil War. Milford is four miles from the railroad and at that time received mail but once a week. Daily papers became a necessity, therefore two boys were sent to Adams every day - One for the Cincinnati Gazette and the other for the Enquirer. Usually the boys would walk together, ride together, loiter together on the wayside, but neither would carry the papers of the other. However, during the more exciting times, the boys would travel different roads. It was on such a return trip that I was passing his mill alone. He came to the roadside to ask me what paper I carried. Hearing that it was the Gazette he reentered the mill without a word of inquiry about the armies, preferring to hear no news rather than to learn what the Gazette had printed.

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DECATUR COUNTY'S EARLIEST

EMIGRANTS--1819-1820.

The Dawn of Civilization in Decatur County.

The unexpectedly cordial welcome extended by readers of THE STANDARD to the series of papers appearing under the above title during the past few months, the eagerness with which every thing touching upon the early local history of our County is seized upon and read, has encouraged the writer to extend the range of his observation and take in some matters of history--partly of record and partly tradition, the later not always sufficiently reliable to bank upon. It is no part of my purpose, however, to write a HISTORY of the County, but rather a compilation of the more im

stant facts and events connected therewith.

THE NEW PURCHASE.

By treaty with the Indians, concluded at St. Marys, Ohio, January 15, 1819, the National Government secured title to all the lands situate between the Whitewater on the east and Whiteriver on the west and north, and lying north of the "Old Boundary Line" and the Grouseland Purchase. In all the settlements along the border there were families waiting and watching for this event, and scarcely had the ink dried on the treaty when the movement began for the Land of Promise.

The first to reach this County was John Fugit, his son John and the late Mrs. Garrison, who came from Cedar Grove, Franklin County, and who were soon after joined by the wife and mother, four sons, (Jesse B., James L., Hugh F. and Isaac W.,) and a younger daughter--all pretty well grown. Griffey Griffitts, wife and son Ishmael came next--this in March--and were followed during the spring by Cornelius and Jesse Cain, Elias Jarrett, William McCoy, with their families, all of whom settled in the vicinity of where Clarksburg now stands. About the same time a settlement was made on Little Flatrock, east of Milroy, which has since given to the Nation the distinguished Dr. Ryland T. Brown, Hon. William J. Brown, three times a member of Congress, and the lately retired Admiral of the Navy, George W. Brown, now a citizen of Indianapolis.

With this the emigration seems to have suspended for the season, and did not resume until the survey was begun. I have heard said that there was a settlement on big Flatrock, and another on Bearcreek, in 1819, or the spring of '20, neither of which claims have I been able to verify.

SURVEYS AND LAND SALES.

With a view to bringing the newly acquired lands into the market at as early a date as possible the National Government sent out surveyors, early in the spring of 1820, to establish the township and range lines and lay them off into sections and smaller subdivisions. In this section, the work was entrusted to Thomas Hendricks, who was at that time a resident of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

(Continued Next Issue)

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MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership	\$5.00	Payable by January 1st.			
Life Membership	\$100.00				
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IF GIFTS: From _____		Address _____			
MEMORIALS					
In Memory of _____		Comments _____			

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